

SUBLIMINAL SEDUCTION

This article was extracted from an article which appeared during the mid-seventies in a magazine called "Heart". There was no author indicated, and the magazine is now believed to be out of print.

Selling products to the subconscious mind.

Warning: You may be
subconsciously manipulated
by the advertisements
reproduced in this article!

In less time than it took you to read these words, you perceived at least two subliminal messages in this article. In fact, it happened so fast that these subliminal messages could have entered your subconscious mind, even if you had merely glanced at them while idly thumbing through this magazine. They may have already secretly determined your future behaviour.

This is not the first time that you have unconsciously perceived subliminal messages that could change your behaviour. It's happened to you before - thousands, perhaps millions of times.

You are not alone. It has happened to virtually everyone who watches television, reads a popular magazine, takes in a movie, goes shopping in a major department or food store, sees a political poster or brochure, listens to the radio, rock'n'roll, or background music, handles money or sees a billboard. In short, virtually everyone in the western world who isn't the most dedicated of hermits - is inundated by subliminals.

Few have even the slightest inkling that someone is communicating directly with the unconscious part of their being or shy it's being done, much less what they can do to protect themselves against it - or even why they should protect themselves.

Subliminal communication consists of presenting a stimulus - usually auditory or visual, but they can be gustatory, tactile, or olfactory (taste,

touch, smell) - that is not perceived consciously or liminally, but rather *subconsciously* or *subliminally*. What we deal with consciously we are likely to critique, analyze, or consider in a rational or logical manner. What bypasses the conscious mind on its way into the subconscious we are much more likely to deal with in an uncritical fashion - and thereby carry out the instructions or suggestions subliminally communicated to us.

Dr. N.F. Dixon, a British psychologist, author of *Subliminal Perception* (which according to one ad agency president is their "operational bible"), wrote: "It may be impossible to resist instructions which are not consciously experienced. There would seem to be a close parallel between these phenomena and those associated with, on the one hand, posthypnotic suggestion and, on the other, neurotic compulsive responses."

Practically applied, subliminal communication can be very useful to anyone who wanted to secretly manipulate the behavior of another. When it's used to seduce you into unconsciously buying, consuming, subscribing, attending, voting for the "right" candidate, remaining loyal to your brand of cigarettes or true to your favorite Scotch whiskey, it's called subliminal seduction."

Dr. Wilson Bryan Key, a psychologist with extensive experience in communications and advertising research, has published three popular books on subliminal manipulation: *Subliminal Seduction*, *Media Sexploitation*, and *The Clam-Plate Orgy*.

In most instances, the manufacturers are totally unaware that subliminal advertising is being used to sell their products. In fact, many employed by the advertising industry are similarly unaware. But while the ad industry claims they are guiltless - whiter than white - it appears that *some* in their ranks are blacker than black. Judge for yourself.

Study the Kanon advert for a moment (next page)... According to Dr. Key's students, this ad appeared in so-called men's magazines, such as *Penthouse* and *Playboy*. How does it make you feel?

Using a one way mirror, Dr. Key found that as people thumbed through a magazine containing this ad, each potential customer was exposed to it for about one to two seconds. About one in ten stopped to read the copy. After all, how much is there to see?

In the lower left-hand quadrant of this ad, we see an upturned left hand holding a bottle of Kanon cologne. In the upper right, we see the right hand holding a knife.

This is an awfully nice picture of a hand holding a bottle of cologne. But how will that alone sell the product? Particularly since most of the millions of readers who saw it will not recall it, nor will they give it more than a glance. Yet the agency who handled the account, in all likelihood, tested its reliability and determined its sales capability before inserting it in high-circulation men's magazines that cost a great deal of money for advertising space.

According to Dr. Key, at the time this ad appeared, it would have cost about \$55,000 to run it one time in a magazine like *Playboy*. The artwork alone probably cost \$5,000 to \$8,000-. Why would the admen be so confident that a photo of a hand holding a bottle would work? No promises, no coupons to send in, no suggestion of the immediate materialisation of beautiful women (if only you use it!).

Alcohol product manufacturers plow about 6% of their gross receipts back into advertising. Based on industry norms, this ad would have had to sell about 1.2 million dollars worth of cologne just to break even. And everyone knows that the nice people who make Kanon cologne are in business to



make a profit.

If the bright young men of Madison Avenue couldn't do better than create an ad that breaks even, they would soon be gainfully employed as night watchmen and there would be a new agency selling Kanon cologne. Dr. Key estimates that one insertion of this ad in one of the big men's magazines probably sold about 3 to 5 million dollars' worth of cologne - not bad for a picture of a hand holding a bottle that did its work in a one-to-two second exposure and then was promptly forgotten *consciously*. But not *subconsciously* - a fact that no agency could overlook.

What made this ad sell Kanon cologne?

Almost everyone has seen perceptual illusions like the one shown in figure 1. They were first described in 1910 by Dr. E. Rubin, a Danish psychologist. In this case, the profiles form a vase - or the outline of the vase forms two profiles, depending on which way you see it.

In Gestalt terminology, this is called a figure-ground reversal. The mind can flip-flop effortlessly from one image to the other. Very few people can see both images simultaneously. This kind of perceptual effect can be used to convey subliminal information.

This ad uses a perceptual illusion similar to the "Rubin's profiles." In this case, it's a *syncretistic*, or two-sided image. One way of looking at it, it's merely a hand. But look at the hand, then look at your own hand at the same angle (or anyone else's, if you can) and see if the picture and a real hand look the same. And then you begin to find out why a picture of a hand holding a bottle costs so much money.

Notice the thumbnail on the far left of the picture wrapped around the cork on top of the Kanon bottle. It is anatomically impossible for the thumbnail to be where it is in relation to the thumb knuckle. Similarly, it's impossible for the thumb, the thumbnail, the bottle, the upper right hand, and the knife to be photographed in a straight shot. They were photographed separately, pasted together, and then retouched with an airbrush - a good deal of expensive work just for a picture of a hand and a bottle.

Study the area where the base of the thumb meets the wrist in the lower, left-hand quadrant of the ad. Notice the two rather bulbous areas at the base of the hand which happen to resemble testicles. The rigid thumb resembles a semi-erect penis.

What you are looking at is a two sided illusion, which is a hand on one side and a male genital on the other. It is interesting to note that the underside of a wrist does not have that much hair on the skin.

Now you might be thinking, "OK, so they put a male genital in the picture ... if you want to see it that way. So what? How does that influence sales, even if it is repressed in the subconscious?"

To answer that, let's examine what else is in the picture and ask a few questions like, "What is a picture of an erect penis doing in a men's magazine?"

Dr. Key explains, "The symbolism is predictable repressible, in view of readers' macho self-fantasies. The over macho image is often considered a camouflage for a more ambiguous, covert sexuality, and a large amount of psychoanalytic theory suggests the illusion's appeal is directed at latent homosexual tendencies - which all men presumably share in some measure.

"The ad is clearly not directed at *overt* male homosexuals ... As yet, there are not enough homosexuals to justify sizable magazine marketing investments. This maybe changing in America, however, in response to such manipulations of the human unconscious," which could increase the number of homosexuals.

Dr. Key also points out that the hand-genital symbolism could allude to masturbation. Or the content could suggest that it will help the reader achieve a large, erect penis.

While these factors alone might be enough to activate someone's perceptual defenses, there is much more. Consider the knife. It's about to slip. The artist has activated a fairly universal male fear of castration. And if you look in the lower, right-hand quadrant of the ad, just below the bottle, you will see the head of a dog with an awl through it.

Dr. Key isn't sure why a dead dog sells cologne. Animals, while frequently used in women's hygiene products, are seldom used in ads aimed at men. But, as Dr. Key points out, "If it didn't sell the product, they wouldn't use it." In one to two seconds, this ad is hardly memorable *consciously*. At subconscious levels, it's unforgettable.

Men's magazines have millions of readers. This Kanon ad (and a multitude like it) is probably still sloshing around in the readers' subconscious, influencing their behavior.

Let's find out more about how subliminals work. Look at the Jantzen bathing suit ad. There is nothing especially unique about this ad. Or is there?

Examine the details critically. As Anton Ehrenzweig wrote in *The Hidden Order of Art*, "Superficially insignificant or accidental looking detail [in art] may well carry the most important unconscious symbolism." And as political scientist Wyndham Lewis pointed out in *The Art of Being Ruled*, "To ignore your environment is eventually to find yourself a slave to it."

This ad appeared in the Canadian edition of *Reader's Digest* in April of 1972. It's a patriotic ad of sorts. The two models are wearing swimsuits patterned after the Union Jack and the red maple leaf - Canada's national emblem.

According to Dr. Key, "At the unconscious level, every minute detail in a photograph is recorded instantly within the brain." Conscious perception seems to work more slowly. But if the designer has done his job properly, the eye will cover most of the detail in a second or two. Like the Kanon ad and virtually every other major ad, this one is designed to do its work in a matter of a second or two.

The eye's fovea - an area smaller than a pinhead located near the centre of the retina, which appears to be the major source of consciously perceived visual information - jumps from place to place in involuntary movements called "saccades." Less than 1/1,000 of the visual fields is in sharp focus at any given time. Not even 10% of the total visual content of a typical ad would be perceived in a normal viewing. Yet all the information and its meaning are recorded instantaneously at subconscious levels.

Considering the nature of perceptual defenses, it is almost certain that some critical details would be suppressed by most people - those details which don't seem to make sense. Take, for example, the female model's

The Short Copy Ad.

A picture is worth a thousand words. In this case, it may be worth more (see previous page). At the conscious level, the picture shows one hand (on the lower left) holding a bottle and the other hand (in the upper right) ready to shave off part of the wooden bottle top. There is another side to this syncretistic (two-sided) image, but it's predictably repressed: a male genital (formed by the left hand) about to be castrated by the knife hand held in the right hand. This ad exploits castration and rejection fears. By the way, see the dog in the lower right, just below the bottle? Why did they put an awl through his head?

Figure-Ground Reversals.

Two faces, a vase - or both? (fig 1) This figure-ground reversal can be seen either way. The mind flips back and forth, viewing one image or the other. Few people can see both simultaneously.

Death Sells.

Airbrush-created ice cubes in the Johnnie Walker ad (fig. 2) have monsters, skulls, and other gruesome sights. The subliminal appeal of this ad is so strong, they don't even bother to show the product.

Case of the Missing Person.

How many people do you see in the Jantzen ad? (fig. 3) Two? There's really three. The third is a woman, just off camera, with her hand on the hip of the female model shown in the picture. This subliminally suggests a "ménage à trois." She's wearing his trunks (with a zipper) and he's wearing hers - a sex role reversal. PS: Can you find the face hidden in this ad?

It's the Ritz.

Sex embedded in your Ritz crackers. (fig. 4)

The Old Bat.

When the advertisers for Yago Sant'gria (fig. 5) concealed a vampire bat - almost no one saw it. But the old bat probably sold a lot of wine.

Take Advantage of a Softie.

Parkay margarine's "least memorable" ad (fig.6) exploits a housewife's subconscious fears of losing her husband and subliminally suggests a solution - castration.

America's Favorite Cancer.

(Fig. 7) "Cancer" retouched into the hockey glove.

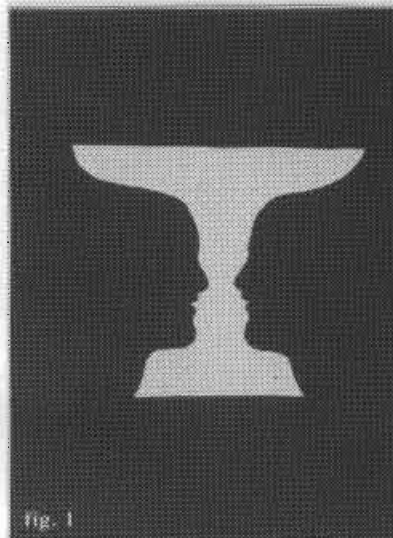


fig. 1

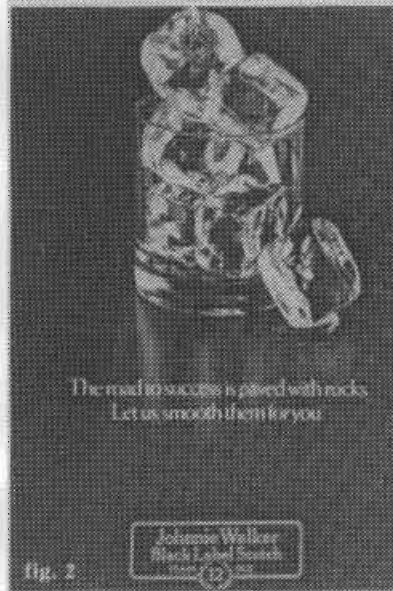


fig. 2



fig. 3

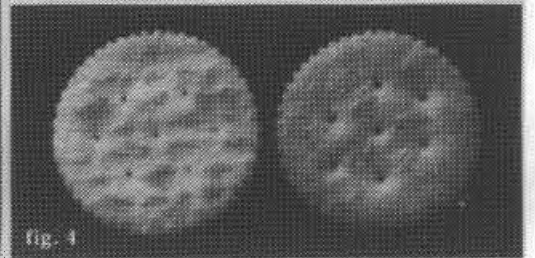


fig. 4

trunks. They have wrinkles in the front and they are sagging. Considering the high cost of advertising and the importance of how the product looks, it's surprising that neither Jantzen nor their agency demanded a better fit or took the trouble to airbrush out the wrinkles and the zipper.

The zipper? - on a woman's suit? It seems like someone made a terrible mistake when this ad was photographed. For she's wearing his trunks. And his are too snug and, oddly, match the design of her top. In other words he's wearing her suit and she's wearing his.

It's no accident, however. It's an intentional sex-role reversal calculated to be consciously screened out but which will be instantly perceived at the unconscious level.

Whoever created the ad - probably an ad agency art director - took the ad several steps further to be sure its subliminal appeal sold bathing suits. Look at the female hand resting on the female model's hip. Who does it belong to?

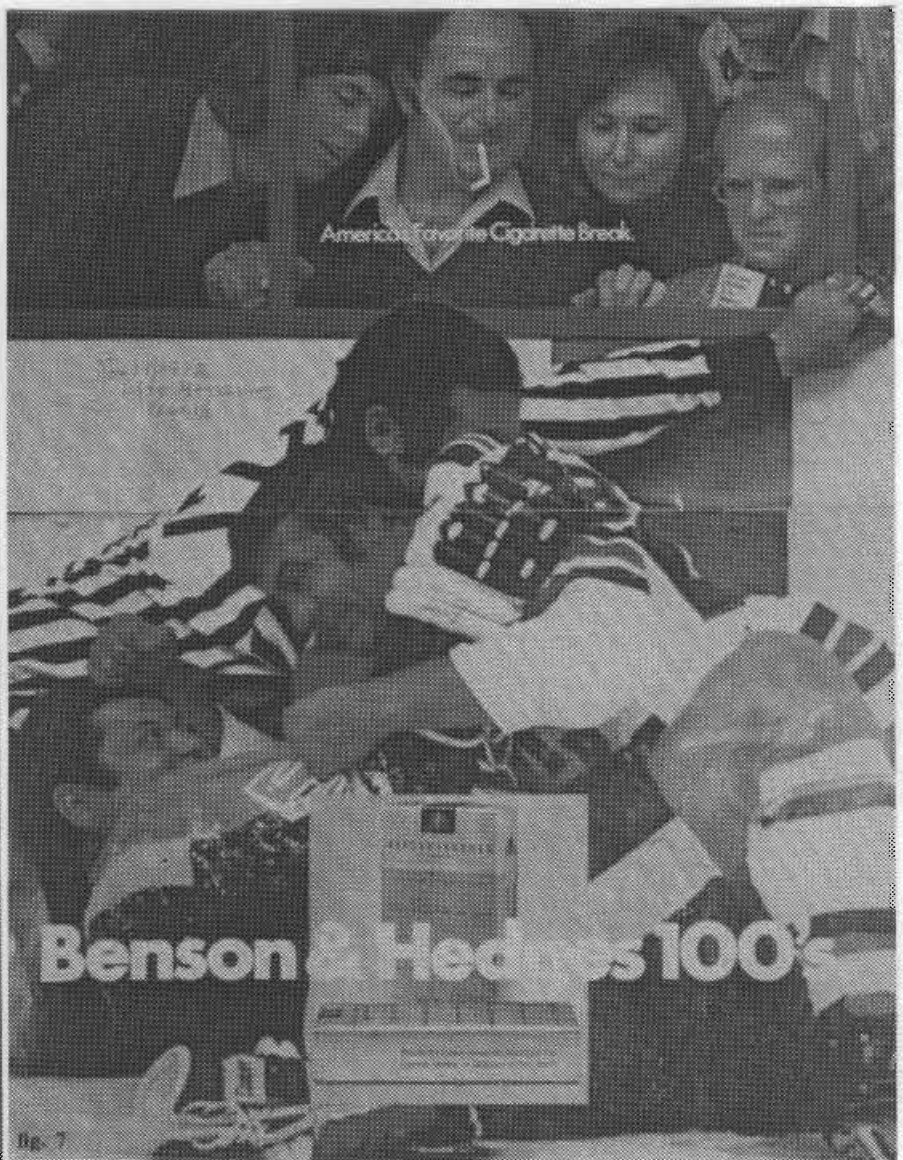
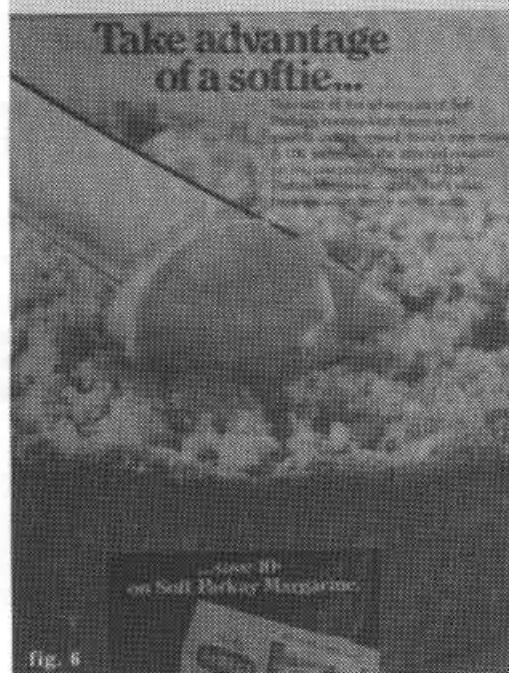
At the angle show, it couldn't belong to the female torso in the picture. The model's arm

would have to be six feet long. There is a third model entirely off camera - with the exception of her hand resting on this erogenous zone. According to Dr. Key, this suggests the possibility of *ménage à trois* relationship - a man and two women.

Just in case that failed to push enough subconscious buttons, an artist airbrushed a face into the surf. See if you can find it. Located right between the female model's legs, it appears to be a face with the cheeks puffed out, blowing on a sensitive portion of her anatomy (see diagram).

This subliminal "embed" (embedded image) is only one of many, many ways used to invade your consciousness. In two seconds or less - subliminal seduction.

How do subliminals work? The answer is that no one really knows. The reason for this is simple: no one knows exactly how the brain works. Despite our vaunted knowledge, scientists do not fully understand the processes that go into raising and lowering a finger. But that doesn't mean subliminal advertisements don't work.



Indeed, it can be demonstrated that subliminal ads do work. Moreover, if admen are true to their colours, it's highly unlikely that they are spending a fortune to amuse themselves playing perceptual games that do not sell a product, especially since they are taking a terrible risk. Most people would be outraged at the invasion of the most sensitive and private areas of consciousness by the admen in the pursuit of sales.

Subliminal advertising seems to appeal to the two dimensions of life common to all people: the origins of life (love or sex) and the end of life (death and its related implications of aggression and violence). These two symbolic polarities - sex and death - lie deep at the root of all the world's literature, art, philosophy, science, religion, and human behaviour.

As Dr. Key explains, "North American society has a vested interest in reinforcing an individual's failure to achieve sexual maturity. By exploiting unconscious fears, forcing them to repress sexual taboos, the media guarantees blind, repressed seeking for value substitutes through commercial products and consumption. Sexual repression, as reinforced by media, is a most viable marketing technology."

Experimental data suggests that substimuli can change a person's attitude toward anything. After enough exposure to subliminal data like this or the clam-plate orgy, many people would change their attitudes toward orgies or group sex. And the theories suggest that it is not the lecher who would be most affected. Similarly, a well adjusted 'swinger' (although one may not really exist) would be far less affected. According to Dr. Key, "Fantasy modification would be most pronounced in individuals with strong, rigid,

moralistic preoccupations - just the opposite of what conventional logic would lead us to believe."

One of the keys of subliminal seduction is to simply bypass the conscious mind. The more memorable the ad is, the less effective it is likely to be. The more common, plain, and unexciting it is, the more likely it is to do its job - which in many cases is to provide a "cover" for substimuli which increase the sales of the product for reasons the buyer is entirely unaware of.

The Parkay advert (see diagram) is a good candidate for "least memorable". It was published in *Family Circle* magazine in November of 1973. Observers found that really no one paid attention to the ad. Average exposure time was one to two seconds. Maybe one in fifteen readers spent an extra second or two to read the copy.

It looked like money in the bank. But how? What is so sales-worthy about this photograph of some margarine on the end of a knife that would justify the millions of dollars invested in space for it?

If you are really an intrepid investigator, you might buy some Parkay margarine and try putting some on the end of a knife so that it looks just like the picture.

You'll probably try for quite a while. Dr. Key has tried and was unable to get a glob of Parkay to even faintly resemble the photograph - an instant indication that this is an airbrush-created fantasy.

It turns out that the two globs of Parkay form glans, or the heads, of two penises. The larger of the two has a highly identifiable coronal ridge.



detail fig. 2



detail fig. 2



detail fig. 2



detail fig. 5



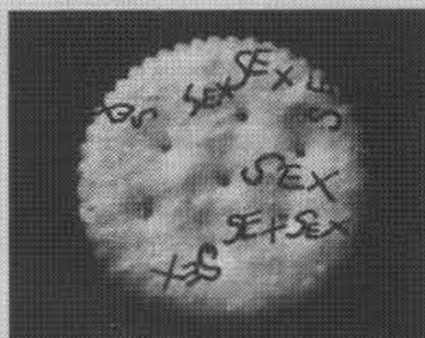
detail fig. 3



fig. 6



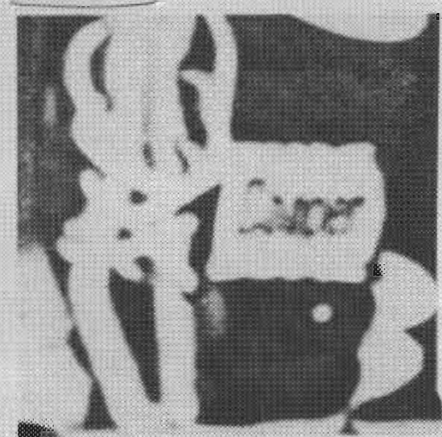
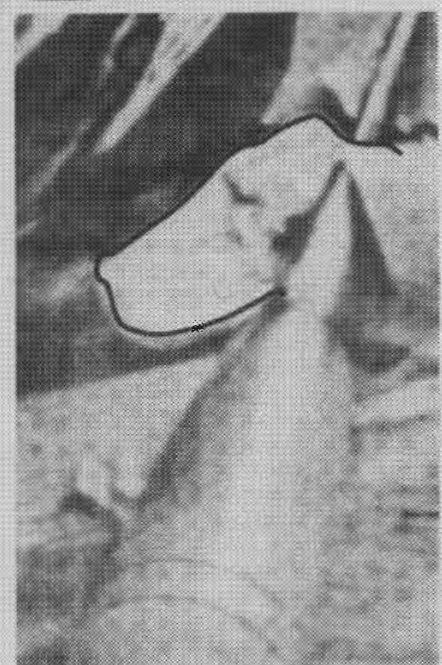
fig. 6



detail fig. 4



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detail fig. 7

The heads of two penises on the edge of a knife blade could suggest male castration. But who is this ad aimed at? Unlike the Kanön ad which appeared in men's magazines, the Parkay ad appeared in *Family Circle*, a magazine read primarily by women.

According to Dr. Key, the suggestion of castration could be an unconscious motive for an insecure American housewife. What ad agency could resist the urge to exploit her fear that her husband might be attracted to a younger woman by suggesting that if she fattens him up, he'll be less vulnerable. And presumably, "old softies" - men whose age has rendered them impotent - get castrated as punishment. As the last sentence in the copy explains, "... guess that's what happens when you're an old softie."

Subliminal advertising is designed to activate a buying decision days, weeks, months, or years after it is perceived. By 1919, Dr. Otto Pötzl established that there was a strong relationship between subliminal stimuli, posthypnotic suggestion, and compulsive neurosis. An individual will perform acts - buy Parkay or anything else properly introduced at subconscious levels - without any conscious knowledge of why he is doing such a thing, although he would most definitely have a conscious rationale highly compatible with his or her self-image. So "least memorable" enters her subconscious and sits there like a time bomb waiting to go off.

Advertising agencies try to steer clear of the messy business of ethics and morality. Their job is to sell products. They often appeal to heavy users of a product in their advertising - for an alcoholic beverage, those who drink fifteen or more drinks per week.

But if we look at the Johnnie Walker advert, (see diagram), we might find the advertisers a little remiss. All they did was to photograph a glass of ice cubes. They didn't even bother to display any of the liquor itself. Yet this ad appeared in virtually every major U.S. national magazine, including *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Playboy*.

Considering the average figure for return on investment, the \$2 million invested in this advert for advertising space would have had to yield about \$50 million in sales to pay for itself.

Those are facts of life, advertising style. Anyone who believes the frequently repeated statement "Advertising doesn't work" isn't aware of the economic of the situation. Indeed, advertising works - particularly when the customer believes that it doesn't.

Nevertheless, this rather unimpressive picture of six ice cubes must have something going for itself to stimulate \$50 million worth of sales - and that "something" is in the ice-cubes, or rather, in the airbrush painting of ice cubes.

If you look at the "ice cubes" close up, you'll notice melting faces, one face screaming, a skull, a bird, a monster, a castrated penis, a devil mask, and more. The brain is able to perceive these images, although some are

upside down or highly distorted.

Heavy alcohol drinkers, those to whom this ad was aimed, are involved in a monstrous self-destruct syndrome. Many are consciously aware that they are destroying themselves. Nevertheless, they compulsively and, in the case of the alcoholic, addictively drink on.

Having shown this slide at several Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, Dr. Key found that many recovered alcoholics were able to relate their withdrawal hallucinations to the imagery. It's entirely possible that this Johnnie Walker ad could have been researched at an AA meeting simply by listening to the testimonials of hallucination experiences.

The great majority of all alcoholic beverage advertising has subliminal stimuli, many using subliminal death and self-destruction imagery. Indeed, it may be that the appeal to the death instinct or the suicide urge may be used to sustain the alcoholic beverage industry at its present size.

One of the most important inventions of the last thirty years is the tachistoscope. It's a hand little gadget that allows someone to flash an image at speeds of up to 1/3,000 of a second - well below the conscious threshold of perception. Using this device, researchers found that they could flash the words *happy* and *angry* on an expressionless face. Test subjects reacted far better to the face when *happy* was flashed. Now stop and consider: if the mere flash of the words *happy* and *angry* change a person's evaluation of a neutral, expressionless face, what results could be obtained if the word *sex* were somehow permanently but subliminally displayed on, say, a product someone was advertising.

The advertiser might become so enthused that he'd want to use it everywhere, for he'd have to search far and wide for a more powerful motivator - the promise of sex form trying or using a product. Advertisers might want to put the word *sex* on everything - display ads, photographs, display boxes, billboards, mailers, crackers, magazine covers, everything ...crackers?

You might think this is a bit far-fetched, but Ritz crackers not only have the word *sex* embedded on the box, but the word appears numerous times on each cracker (see diagram). Researchers have found that words and pictures, when considered as subliminal stimuli, are mutually reinforcing, integrative, and similar in their effects upon behavior.

Now imagine how a crackerjack advertising man might feel about giving Ritz crackers sex appeal, like alcoholic beverages whose ads often show beautiful men and women in suggestive poses. Imagine his sense of conquest by embedding the word *sex* on those homely little wafers, thereby transforming them into luscious, round, bit-sized morsels. Dynamite!

Sex is virtually embedded in everything. It's in ads for liquor, cigarettes, film, cars - just about every consumer product. It's embedded in the covers of magazines - not just *Playboy*, and *Penthouse*, but *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, and most other large circulation magazines.

Although it is by far the most commonly used, *sex* is not the only word embedded in advertising. The same principle that works for *sex* also works for other verbal substimuli. And although the advertisers' choice of hidden words doesn't identify them as masters of Elizabethan English, it does show them to be cunning exploiters of the language, willing to use emotionally charged words - always associated in the vernacular - that are associated with sex and death.

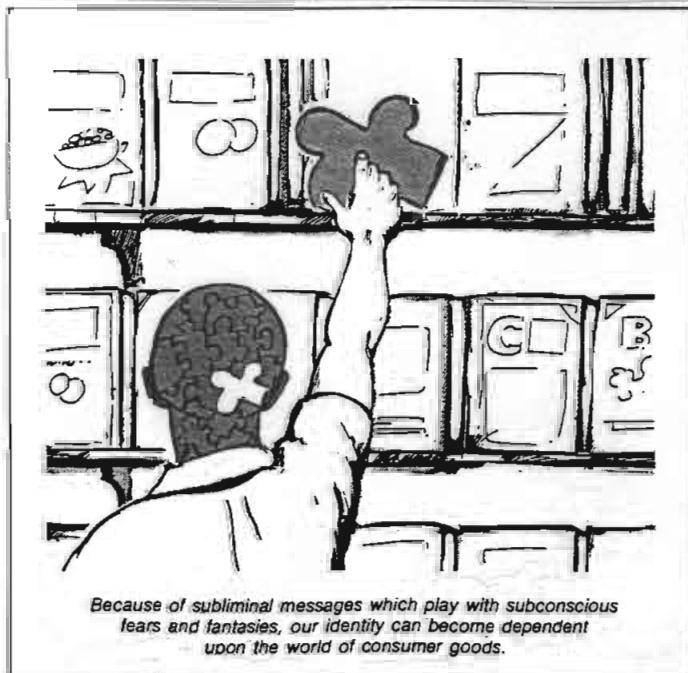
About nine such words are frequently used in national advertising: *sex*, *f_k*, *c_nt*, *p_ssy*, *pr_ck*, *penis*, *dead*, *die*, *kill*. Occasionally, phrases akin to posthypnotic commands are embedded: *U Buy* and *Get It*. But among the embedded words, *sex* is king and hidden virtually everywhere.

One of the great calamities in the world is the frenzied pursuit of expensive consumer items such as alcoholic beverages and cigarettes - that have demonstrably deadly effects. Yet most people accept this usage where we spend billions for the privilege of slowly and painfully destroying ourselves ... with remarkable calm.

Much subliminal advertising is apparently directed toward the self-destruction fantasies we have at subconscious levels. Not only do we find it in alcoholic beverage ads and a variety of other products, but it's in cigarette ads also. Apparently, "death" sells!

The tobacco industry spends nearly one billion dollars a year on advertising, most of it aimed at people under twenty.

Take a look at one ad Benson & Continued on page 64



Because of subliminal messages which play with subconscious fears and fantasies, our identity can become dependent upon the world of consumer goods.

SUBLIMINAL SEDUCTION

Continued from page 16

Hedges ran a number of years ago (see diagram). This two page spread appeared in January of 1972 in *Look, Life* and a variety of other magazine. It's a picture of a fight at a hockey game, which is known for its altercations. There doesn't seem to be much to justify the time and money that went into it, particularly since it was perceived for only two to three seconds by most readers.

Among the many perceptual tricks at work in this ad, is the retouch of the name of the hockey glove's manufacturer, located in the foreground of the ad. Those who smoke usually perceive the word to be *Cooper* - the actual manufacturer of the glove. But the word has been carefully retouched to read *Cancer*. And those who do not smoke almost immediately read the word as it has been retouched.

Why did the advertisers go to the trouble to subliminally embed the word *Cancer* in a cigarette advert? It's possible that the agency was trying to convey the meaning that Benson & Hedges had somehow won a victory over cancer - a cruel hoax if that was their point. But more likely, they were appealing to the self-destruct mechanism most people have to some degree or another. For as advertisers well know, death sells.

Advertising has made use of similar motifs in a subtler, subliminal fashion - with a style that sells.

One of the most beguiling ways of bypassing

the conscious mind in order to seduce the subconscious is through anamorphic art. Few have ever heard of it, much less recognize it or its potential dangers when they see it.

Thought to have first been discovered by Leonardo da Vinci, it is a technique for distorting art in a precise and geometrical manner which allows the image to come back into focus when viewed through an anamorphoscope - usually a polished cone or cylinder. There is ample evidence that the subconscious immediately sees and brings the picture into sharp resolution even though it may be unnoticed and incomprehensible to the conscious mind.

Virtually everywhere you go you are constantly being assaulted by subliminal programming. Radio programs have subliminal messages for listeners to "Let your eyes close and your muscles relax."

Not only are there subliminals on the radio, the background music of some department stores, in the newspapers, on television, and in all the print media, but if you are ever arrested and given the third degree, it may be with the aid of a third party - two cops and the voice of an unseen (and probably unheard) person subliminally beckoning you to "confess" and "get it off your chest."

Some bakeries are now using special odors to lure you, like a moth to the their goodies. Candy stores do the same thing with specially designed

odours that enhance sales. Subliminals make movies more exciting, "kick tripping the audience," as it is called in the movie industry. As the producer of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* put it -perhaps more to the point, - "Subliminal perception is a killer."

The entry of subliminal persuasion into the political arena is extraordinarily frightening.

Virtually all political candidates who can afford a good ad agency have the word *sex* and perhaps some of the other embedded in their campaign posters. Those using subliminals are not guaranteed to win. Indeed, it's rare that the candidate actually knows what makes his posters "get out the vote." But anyone who doesn't use subliminals is almost destined to lose, according to Dr. Key.

Sex in the margarine ad. *Sex* on a Howard Jackson's place mat. *Sex* on my ritz cracker and all over the face of that young senatorial nominee. I can't believe it. I'm amazed by the intricate, calculating, conscious planning of big business to extract more and more dollars out of a weary unsuspecting populace.

And when Key tells me to pull out a five dollar bill and take a look a President Lincoln's beard ...That hits deep. Almost too deep.

S-E-X? In Lincoln's beard? Come on. Why? And who?

N